

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Riviera Motor Sales Company Building **5948-60 N. Broadway**

**Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on
Chicago Landmarks, April 5, 2012**



CITY OF CHICAGO
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Housing and Economic Development
Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

RIVIERA MOTOR SALES COMPANY BUILDING

5948-60 N. BROADWAY

BUILT: 1925-26
ARCHITECT: R. BERNARD KURZON

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is a finely-designed and crafted automobile showroom that exemplifies the importance of the automobile sales and service industry to the history of early 20th-century Chicago. The building was built by automobile dealers Isadore and Isaac H. Burnstine to house a Chrysler automobile franchise. Situated on the southwest corner of N. Broadway and W. Elmdale, the building is a well-known commercial building in the Edgewater neighborhood and is the most architecturally-significant and intact automobile-related building associated with the “automobile row” that developed along Broadway in the 1920s.

With its expansive glass storefront windows accented by an elaborate band of Venetian Gothic-style terra-cotta ornament, visually-effusive Classical- and Gothic-style entrances, and a finely-detailed showroom interior, the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building was conceived as an automobile “gallery,” meant to show off new automobiles as objects of technological art. The influence of the Venetian Gothic – a regional variation of the Gothic architectural style – can be seen in the building’s use of bold Gothic ornament and patterned brickwork. The Riviera’s cream and pink Gothic- and Classical-style terra cotta was created by the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company, Chicago’s leading architectural terra-cotta manufacturer in the early 20th century. Leaded-glass windows and diaper-patterned brickwork also distinguish the building’s exterior.

Inside, the building's two remarkably-preserved, high-ceilinged salesrooms are arguably Chicago's finest-surviving historic automobile showroom interiors. Their overall designs were based on exotic "Mediterranean" historic precedents from Italy and Spain, with rough-plastered walls ornamented with pilasters framing decorative "blind" arches; grand staircases (one of which is ornamented with a fountain) that access visually-dramatic open mezzanines with projecting balconies; low-relief plaster panels and medallions; pillars ornamented with spiral colonettes; decorative ceilings with shallow rectilinear and curved coffering; and highly-decorative metal chandeliers. They were created to convey a sense of luxury, good taste, and artistry within which to examine and purchase new and used automobiles.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

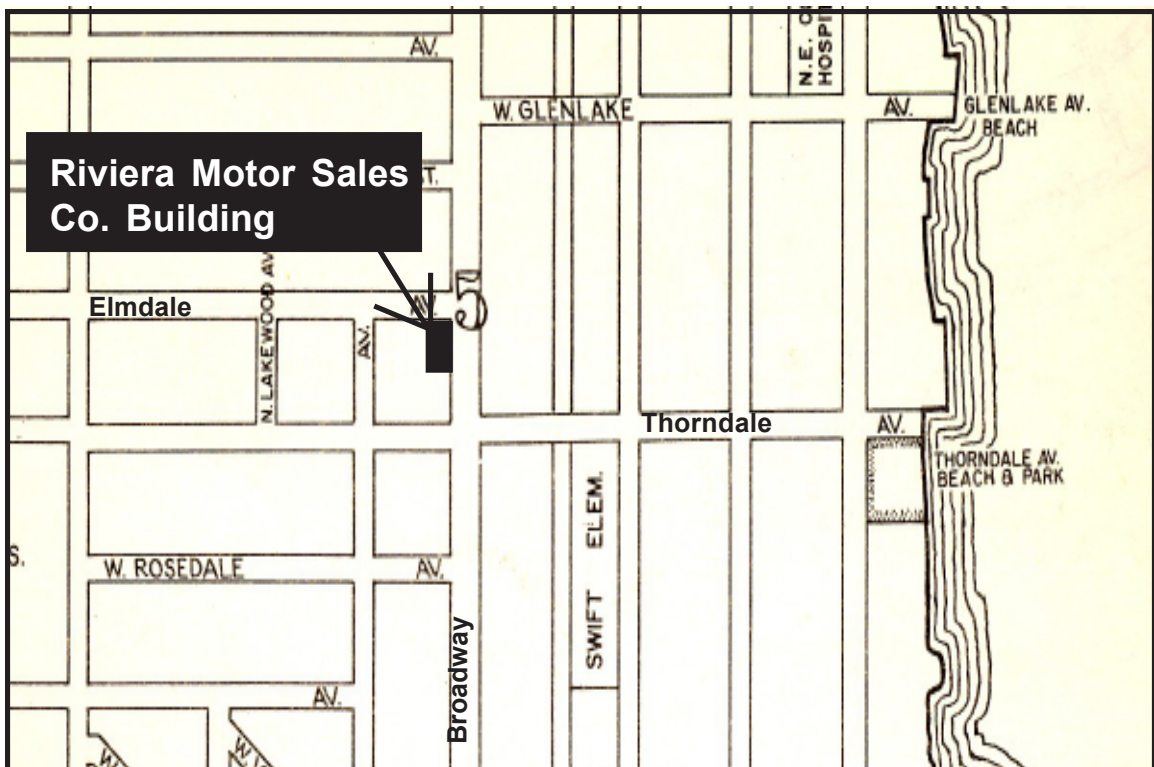
The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building was built by Isadore and Isaac Burnstine in 1925-26. The Burnstines were already established automobile dealers, with the Riviera Motor Sales Company previously housed in two separate locations at 4527 N. Broadway and 4824 N. Broadway (both buildings demolished). They also had owned for several years the Burnstine Motor Sales Company at 2457 S. Michigan Ave. (building demolished) and were building a new building in 1925 to house the Capitol Motor Sales Company at 3041-43 W. Lawrence Ave. at the same time they constructed the new home for the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Architect R. Bernard Kurzon was the architect for both the Capitol and Riviera Motor Sales buildings.

Through an associate, Sophia Seltzer, five lots at the southwest corner of N. Broadway and W. Elmdale were bought in March and April 1925. Later that year, on June 22, 1925, the Burnstines acquired a City of Chicago building permit for the construction of the building, which was completed in July 1926.

Exterior

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is located in the Edgewater community area on Chicago's North Side lakefront. The building is located on North Broadway, an important business and arterial street running north-south through the neighborhood. Prominently situated on a large corner lot, the building is one of the most visually-striking buildings along Broadway, which is lined with a mix of small houses, flats, and commercial buildings largely built between 1890 and 1910; somewhat larger 1920s-era residential/commercial buildings; supermarkets and strip malls built in the 1960s through 1980s; and apartment and commercial buildings built during the last decade's real-estate boom.

Scattered among these buildings are a handful of remaining automobile showrooms, including the Riviera, that were built in the 1920s, along with a greater number of automobile garages; auto repair and body shops; and stores that originally sold tires, batteries, and other automobile-related equipment and supplies. The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building housed a Chrysler automobile franchise that served residents of Edgewater and adjacent neighborhoods, and it is the finest of the automobile sales and service buildings surviving from the 1920s heyday of Broadway's "automobile row."



Built in 1925-26, the Riviera Motor Car Company Building is a three-story brick- and terra-cotta-clad building on the southeast corner of N. Broadway and W. Elmdale.

The three-story Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is rectangular in plan, with a footprint of roughly 131 x 125 feet and a height of approximately 40 feet. The building is constructed of reinforced concrete and clad with brown brick and cream- and pink-colored terra cotta. Although a unified block at first glance, the building has two sections that originally had separate layouts and functions. The front section, facing Broadway and turning the corner onto Elmdale, is three stories in height with a pair of first-floor retail storefronts from which automobiles were originally sold. These storefronts have expansive storefront windows ornamented with leaded-glass windows and elaborate cream- and pink-colored terra cotta using both Gothic- and Classical-style decorative motives. This ornament surrounds two storefront entrances at 5948 and 5960 N. Broadway and runs as a continuous wide band atop the storefront windows. Above these storefronts are two upper-floors of small 2- and 3-room apartments with visually-warm brown brick walls, relatively small windows and similarly-colored, somewhat simpler Gothic-style terra-cotta ornament, including corner piers, sills, a few Gothic-arched window surrounds with attached finials, and panels with finials along the parapet.

The building is visually unified by a common palette of finely-crafted Gothic- and Classical-style ornament executed in cream- and pink-colored terra cotta and differing shades of brown brick. The influence of the Venetian Gothic can be seen in the building's combination of boldly-molded Gothic-style ornament, especially the continuous terra-cotta band above the first floor, with finely-patterned brickwork. The building's two storefront entrances have visually-elaborate terra-cotta surrounds with Classical-style pediments, idealized "putti" heads, brackets, low-relief foliate decoration, and moldings combined with Gothic-style tracery in the French Gothic Flamboyant manner. This terra-cotta decoration continues into recessed entrances (now enclosed with doors installed circa 1987-90 to create airlocks) with terra-cotta paneling and detailing on both walls and ceilings.

The showroom storefronts have large continuous bands of glass that visually "dematerialize" the building's first floor to provide maximum light into what were originally the building's two automobile showrooms. Above the storefronts runs a band of pointed-arched transom windows filled with leaded glass, above which is a boldly-molded, continuous band of Venetian Gothic-style hanging pendants ornamented with Gothic-style tracery. At the Broadway-Elmdale corner, terra-cotta piers are ornamented with Gothic-style hoods decorated with tracery. Storefront windows, terra-cotta detailing and leaded-glass transoms then extend around the corner onto the Elmdale façade, extending roughly two-thirds of the building towards the alley.

The remaining third of the Elmdale façade is a relatively windowless section that originally housed automobile service, repair and storage facilities. It is clad with similarly-colored brown brick with darker brick used as a visual accent in a criss-cross "diaper pattern." First-floor windows with high sills are ornamented with Gothic-style terra-cotta surrounds. The middle of these windows is "blind" and also infilled with brick in a diaper pattern, while the flanking windows have leaded glass. A band of cream- and pink-colored terra-cotta ornamented with tracery defines the rooftop parapet. The building's rear (alley) elevation is clad with common brick and is unornamented; it was originally built with large automobile-scaled garage doors to access service bays which have since been infilled with brick.



The Broadway elevation of the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is visually dominated by the large glass storefront windows, terra-cotta detailing around the storefront entrances and especially the visually-lavish continuous decorative band above the storefronts comprised of boldly-molded Venetian Gothic-style hanging pendants and tracery.



The building's large storefront windows and bold terra-cotta ornament wrap the corner onto Elmdale. The rear third of the Elmdale facade is ornamented with a diaper-patterned brick wall that hides what was originally the Riviera Motor Sales Company's service and repair shop.

An entrance to upper-floor apartments, ornamented with Gothic-style details including an ogee-arched drip molding with projecting crockets and finials, is located on the Elmdale side of the building.



On Elmdale is the entrance to the building's upper-floor apartments. It is finely-detailed with an elaborate Gothic-style, terra-cotta ogee-arched drip molding ornamented with tracery, projecting crockets and finials. Above the entrance are three small windows lighting the stairhall that are also surrounded by terra-cotta Gothic-style moldings.

Interior

The building has two large storefront spaces facing Broadway that were originally used as showrooms and office space for the Riviera Motor Sales Company. The larger, northernmost space spans two-thirds of the building's width and is accessed through the entrance at 5960 N. Broadway. The other smaller space to the south is accessed through its own doorway at 5948 N. Broadway.

Both showrooms are large, open, high-ceilinged spaces, unsubdivided by floor-to-ceiling partitions. They are decorated in a historic revivalist manner that suggests historic Mediterranean architecture. The larger of the two showrooms has walls covered with rough-textured plaster. Within that space, the wall separating the two showrooms has large shallow "blind" pointed arches separated by pilasters decorated with moldings. The mezzanine and projecting balconies are ornamented with low-relief foliate panels and shields. The central columns are set on high bases and are decorated with delicate twisted colonnettes at the corners. Above a Gothic-style capital, each column flares out into simple clusters of ribs that rise and spread outward at the ceiling. In the center of the room, the ceiling is detailed with a shallow round medallion with a "groining" pattern radiating out from a central point. The rest of the ceiling has a similarly-detailed, ribbed groining laid out in a grid pattern. Junctures in the groining are ornamented with small "bosses," or decorative knobs. Large-scaled, highly-decorative metal chandeliers light the space. The floor is carpeted.

The smaller of the two showrooms has similar detailing, including a central column decorated with corner twisted colonnettes, a simple Gothic-style capital and bundled ribs flaring outward to a circular low-relief groined medallion set within a larger rectilinear-groined ceiling. At the rear of the space has an open mezzanine with shallow pointed-arch openings. Shallow "blind" pointed arches separated by pilaster also decorate the wall separating the two showrooms.

Architect R. Bernard Kurzon

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building was designed by architect Richard Bernard Kurzon. He was born in Chicago in 1885 and graduated in 1917 with a degree in architecture from Chicago's Armour Institute (a predecessor school to the Illinois Institute of Technology). He worked as a draftsman for Robert DeGolyer, a Chicago architect noteworthy for his hotel and apartment building designs, from 1919 until 1922, before he started his own firm.

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building appears to be one of his first independent designs, built when Kurzon was only 30. It is one of three buildings known to be designed by Kurzon that are documented as "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS). One is



Top left: A photograph of the inside decorative surround for the entrance to the larger of the two former automobile showrooms (entered from 5960). Top right: A view of the showroom's decorative plaster ceiling, decorative-metal ceiling light fixtures and an ornamented column. Bottom left: Decorative plaster work inside the former showroom, between storefront windows. Bottom right: A photograph of a column in the smaller of the two former showrooms (at 5948) taken in 1987 by Chicago Historic Resources Survey staff. The showroom has similar decorative columns and ceiling "groining" with small "bosses," or decorative knobs, as the larger showroom.

also an automobile showroom—a two-story terra-cotta-clad building built for the Burnstine-owned Capitol Motor Sales Co. at 3041-43 W. Lawrence (extant), designed with exterior Gothic- and Classical-style terra-cotta ornament similar to that found on the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building. The building's decorative salesroom, with its coffered ceiling, rough-plastered and niched walls, and open mezzanine, is decorated in a similar manner to the two Riviera salesrooms. (An adjacent three-story apartment building at 3035-39 W. Lawrence was designed by Kurzon and built by the Burnstines at the same time as the showroom, but under a separate building permit.)

The third building by Kurzon documented as “orange” by the CHRS is a one-story terra-cotta-clad industrial building at 2611 W. Chicago, built in 1930 for the Crystal Pure Candy Company (extant). It is handsomely detailed with low-relief Art Deco-style foliate ornament.

Other documented buildings by Kurzon include the Sheridan-Roscoe Apartments (1927), a 14-story apartment building at 434 W. Roscoe; the Lunt Shore Castle Apartments at 1119 W. Lunt (1923-24); a 7-story apartment building at 5455 S. Blackstone (1928); and a combined shop/apartment building on the northeast corner of N. Ridge and W. Estes (1924-25).

Besides the Riviera and Capitol Motor Sales buildings, Kurzon designed at least two other automobile showrooms—one for the Burnstines at 1835 Ridge in Evanston (1925-26) and one for the John Lefkin Auto Sales Company at 10430-36 S. Michigan Ave. (1926) in the Roseland neighborhood. He also remodeled and built an addition to the Morris Sachs clothing store at 6638 S. Halsted in the Englewood community in 1940. (All three of these buildings have been demolished.)

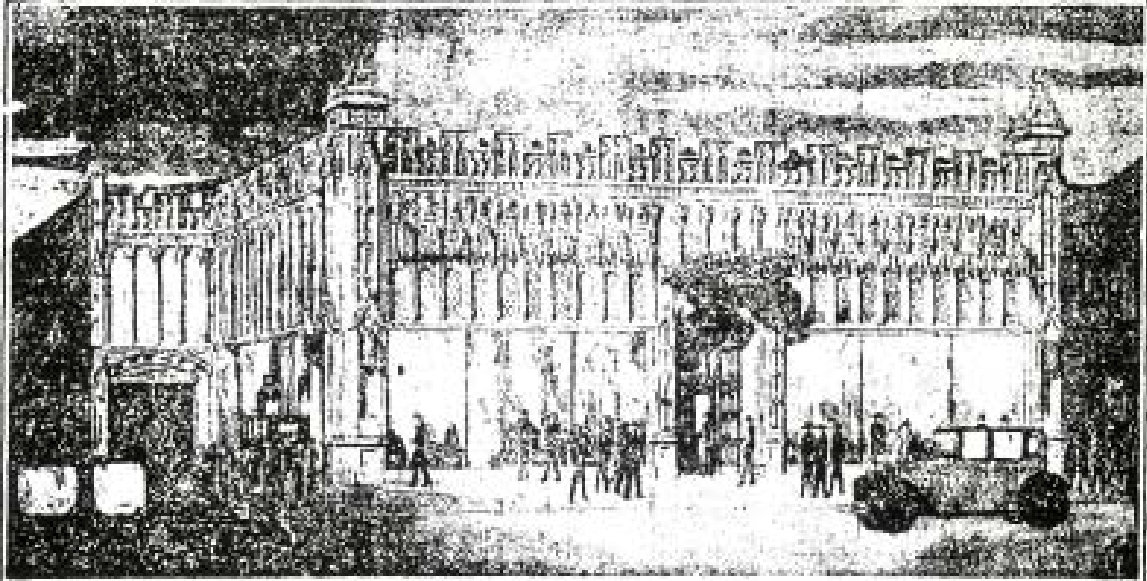
Kurzon also designed an automobile service building on the northwest corner of S. Michigan Ave. and E. 26th St. for the Cord Tire Company (demolished). Touted in the *Chicago Tribune* as “the World’s Largest SUPER SERVICE STATION,” the building provided space for an “auto laundry,” gas station, and stores selling batteries, tires, driving lights, and a variety of other auto-related services. He also designed a two-story building in the Andersonville neighborhood at 5238 N. Clark St. that combined stores, flats and an 80-car garage (extant; now houses Cheetah Gym).

In 1945 Kurzon designed an addition to the Storkline Furniture Company factory (extant), a manufacturer of baby furniture at S. Kilbourn Ave. and W. 18th St. in the North Lawndale community. He later moved to Los Angeles, and in 1950 he designed the Holden Medical Building there. He was a resident of Beverly Hills until at least 1970. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects, the records of which record his death in 1985.



Along with the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, two other buildings by architect R. Bernard Kurzon were documented as “orange” by the Chicago Historic Resources Survey. Top: A smaller version of the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building, the Capitol Motor Sales Company Building at 3041-43 W. Lawrence was also built as an automobile showroom for Isaac and Isadore Burnstine in 1925-26, along with an adjacent apartment building. Bottom: The Crystal Pure Candy Company building (extant), built as an addition to an existing factory, was constructed in 1930.





Other buildings designed by Kurzon include (top) an automobile showroom for the John Lefkin Auto Sales Company that was built in the Roseland neighborhood at 10430-36 S. Michigan Ave.; (middle) an automobile service building for the Cord Tire Company that was built at S. Michigan Ave. and E. 26th St.; and (bottom) an apartment building at 5455 S. Blackstone Ave. in the Hyde Park neighborhood. (Only the apartment building remains.)

THE EARLY AUTOMOBILE SALES AND SERVICE INDUSTRY IN CHICAGO AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH BROADWAY'S "AUTOMOBILE ROW"

The automobile revolutionized American culture and society during the early 20th century. The country's built environment from its largest cities such as Chicago to the smallest rural hamlets was transformed by the needs and possibilities inherent with automobile ownership and use. The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building exemplifies the way in which automobiles were marketed and sold in the 1920s, a decade of tremendous growth in both automobile use and the development of Chicago neighborhoods in response to the increased use of automobiles as a primary means of conveyance by Chicagoans.

The automobile made its first appearance on Chicago streets in 1892. The following year, several models of automobiles were displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition. At first autos were marketed as luxury novelties and "playthings of the wealthy," according to architectural historian Robert Brueggemann. In 1902 there were only 600 cars in all of Chicago. Most of these early cars were sold through bicycle dealerships or by carriage makers such as the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Co., which would transition from carriage-making to automobile-manufacturing in the early twentieth century.

In the early 1900s automobile manufacturers such as Ford and Buick began to construct and market cars that could be seen as modern alternatives to more traditional horse-drawn vehicles. In Chicago pioneering auto manufacturer Henry Ford built a two-story dealership at 1444-46 S. Michigan Ave. in 1905, while a Buick showroom was built nearby at 1454 S. Michigan Ave. two years later. (Both buildings are contributing buildings within the Motor Row Chicago Landmark District).

The new availability of reliable, affordable automobiles saw their numbers skyrocket. By 1910 there were 12,926 passenger automobiles registered in Chicago. By 1920, the number of cars had grown to 90,000, and, just five years later (at the time of the construction of the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building in 1925), this number had soared to nearly 300,000. In March 1927 *Architectural Forum* noted this immense growth in the number of cars and their impact on American society:

The making and selling of automobiles have rapidly grown to be one of the foremost industries of America; it is likewise one of the most spectacular. Within a comparatively few years the automobile industry has leaped to the front in a manner nothing short of amazing. Its effects are felt and seen in every direction. From the congested traffic in the streets of our cities to the pages of every magazine and newspaper we pick up, we are constantly reminded that we live in the 'Age of the Automobile.'"

As automobiles increasingly became a common necessity of urban life, Chicago developed a "Motor Row" a section of the city where automobiles sales and service companies clustered. Especially in the first two decades of the 20th century, as automobiles were being introduced and popularized, such a Motor Row was handy for sales, service and marketing. Potential auto buyers could take public transportation to this cluster of automobile showrooms in order to look



Chicago's first "motor row" developed in the early twentieth century along S. Michigan Ave. and adjacent parallel streets on the Near South Side. A wide variety of automobile sales and service companies built buildings in the area, which became a mecca for auto buyers. Top: Bystanders admiring cars parked on S. Michigan Ave. Bottom left: A view of S. Michigan Ave. in 2000. Bottom right: The Motor Row Chicago Landmark District was designated that same year.

and comparison-shop (an idea that survives today with auto malls). After buying, the clustering of service companies and sellers of auto batteries, tires, and other supplies made the maintenance of these “new-fangled” machines easier.

In most cities, including Chicago, these areas where auto companies and suppliers gathered were typically near downtown along major arterial streets. (Smooth pavement was essential for the proper tryout of new cars.) In Boston, Commonwealth Avenue from Kenmore Square west to Brighton Avenue was the focus of the city’s automobile trade. Locust Street in St. Louis and Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena were the location of their city’s “automobile rows.” In Brooklyn, Bedford Avenue saw the construction of many automobile dealers, while Broadway on either side of W. 57th Street was the nexus of the auto trade in Manhattan.

Chicago’s first and largest “Motor Row” was built largely between 1902 and 1930 and was centered on South Michigan Avenue from Roosevelt Rd. to as far south as 31st St. Along Michigan and adjacent parallel streets such as Indiana and Wabash, automobile showrooms, tire stores, service garages, battery dealers, and other automobile-related businesses jostled for space and attention from the public. The area developed in the 1900s through the 1920s as a densely-built grouping of masonry buildings built without street setbacks, and from lot line to lot line. Large windows at both street level and above provided both visibility of automobiles and related products to passersby and light for auto repair and related services.

Buildings typically were relatively restrained in their exterior ornamentation, with automobile manufacturer insignia often found in terra-cotta medallions atop building facades. This, however, began to change in the 1920s as property owners began to build more elaborate buildings, especially showrooms, meant to turn the buildings themselves into marketing tools. The Hudson and Marmon showrooms, located side-by-side in the 2200-block of S. Michigan Ave. (built in 1922 on the former site of the Chicago Orphan Asylum) have exotic Spanish Revival-style exteriors. They also featured expansive, finely-detailed showrooms within which to showcase the latest automobile models for sale.

The Motor Row Chicago Landmark District contains the best-surviving historic automobile-related buildings from this early history, including a core district between Cermak Rd. and 25th Street and several individual buildings along Michigan between E. 14th St. and Cermak Rd. Additional documentation on the history of Motor Row and its buildings is found in the District’s Landmark Designation Report, published in 2000. Chicago’s Motor Row is the largest-surviving grouping of such buildings in the nation.

North Broadway’s “Automobile Row”

Chicago’s early Motor Row along South Michigan Avenue remained an important center of the automobile sales and service industry into the 1930s. But with the City’s tremendous growth during the 1920s, both in terms of residential and commercial development and automobile ownership, automobile sales and service companies spread

throughout Chicago's outlying neighborhoods. During this decade smaller-scale "automobile rows" emerged along several major arterial streets throughout the City, including Ashland, Western, Milwaukee, Lawrence, and Archer.

North Broadway, the location of the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, was the location of one of the more prominent of these neighborhood "Automobile Rows." From Lawrence Avenue on the south to Devon Avenue on the north, Broadway saw the construction of dozens of buildings during the 1920s to house automobile showrooms, auto service and repair shops, automobile storage garages, and a plethora of stores selling automotive supplies and ancillary equipment. In the February 22, 1920, *Chicago Tribune*, the paper noted, "Why should the south side have the only motor row, when there are said to be as many motorists, prospective and present, north of the river as south of it?" Although specifically commenting on the planned construction of automobile showrooms in the 4800-block of N. Broadway, the newspaper's observation was valid for the larger development along this section of North Broadway.

Up to the 1920s, Broadway (formerly Evanston Avenue) had been a relatively undeveloped street, sporadically lined with single-family houses, graystones and small flat buildings, plus one- to three-story commercial buildings. These typically had been clustered around and near intersections between Broadway and east-west streets such as Bryn Mawr and Argyle that boasted stops on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad running just east of and parallel to Broadway. (This rail line became the location of the CTA's Red Line, which was extended north of Wilson in 1908.) The increased use of automobiles by middle-class Chicagoans encouraged the spread of development along the length of Broadway, with many of the new buildings built in the 1920s being for automobile-related uses.

Broadway's "Automobile Row" as it was called in the *Chicago Tribune* never had the high concentration of buildings and automobile uses that the earlier South Michigan Avenue Motor Row had. Instead, the street had a more suburban quality, with lower one- to three-story buildings predominating and older residential and commercial buildings often remaining amidst newer auto-related buildings.

The largest and most visually prominent of the automobile-related buildings were automobile showrooms, including the Riviera. Car manufacturers increasingly were selling cars not just through direct ownership of showrooms, but also through franchises purchased and operated by local businessmen. A car company such as Chrysler, General Motors, or Ford would establish sales "territories" where a single franchise would have exclusive sales rights. These dealerships were often known by the names of their dealers or by names (such as "Riviera") that conjured a sense of luxury, power, or exoticism. Also increasingly seen were dealers specializing in used cars, a relatively new market beginning to be fueled by repeat automobile buyers.

By 1929, the year of the stock market collapse, Broadway had more than 30 automobile dealers selling either new or used cars. Dealers and their showrooms on Broadway tended to be located in three main clusters. The Riviera Motor Sales Company, which was a Chrysler



North Broadway developed as one of Chicago's larger neighborhood "automobile rows" during the 1920s. Top: The Broadway Motor Sales Co. Building at 4824-26 N. Broadway (demolished), designed in 1920 by Percival Johnstone, was an earlier location for the Riviera Motor Sales Company before the construction of the building at Elmdale. Bottom left: The Cadillac Motor Co. Building on the northeast corner of N. Broadway and W. Foster, designed by the Everet Winters Co. in 1925, was one of the street's largest automobile sales buildings (demolished). Bottom right: An advertisement touting investment in the Rangecroft Flotow Building (housing a Ford dealership) that was located at Broadway and Argyle (either demolished or greatly altered).

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Ford Dealer's Building**

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THE FOREMAN TRUST AND SAVINGS BANK, CHICAGO, TRUSTEE

Securities: These bonds are the direct obligation of the Rangecroft Flotow Building Corporation and are secured by a standard first mortgage on land bearing 12 1/2% net on Broadway and 12 1/2% net on Argyle Streets, and the two-story automobile sales and service building, containing two large showrooms, and complete facilities for the repair and servicing of Ford automobiles. In its entirety it will be one of the largest and best equipped buildings in Chicago, housing an authorized Ford Dealer.

Location: The property is located on Broadway, one of the principal business thoroughfares of the North Side, just two blocks north of Uppercut Bayou (Broadway and Lawrence Avenue), the heart of the Uppercut Chicago Business District. Broadway from Lawrence Avenue northward is the principal automobile row of the North Side.

Present Owners: The building will be occupied and owned by Rangecroft Flotow Inc., and the Rangecroft Flotow Building Corporation, respectively, whose principal stockholders are identical. The company, formerly the L. D. Wells Block Company, established in 1925, operates in a growing and densely populated district from Devon Avenue to Irving Park Boulevard, and from Western Avenue to Lake Michigan, which contains approximately 4 square miles. No other authorized Ford Dealer is at the present time established in this district. The trust between the operating company and the building corporation is for a term of ten years ending on January 1st, 1939, which term exceeds the final maturity of these bonds.

Valuation: Land and Building independently appraised at \$375,000, of which \$210,000 represents the land and \$165,000 the building. This represents a 187 1/2% gain.

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Besides the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building, surviving automobile showroom buildings (although all altered) on Broadway include (top left): the REO Motor Sales Co. Building at 5710 N. Broadway, designed in 1923 by E.P. Press; (top right) the Hon, Smithson and Raymond showroom (for many years a Chevrolet dealership) at 6339 N. Broadway, built by Isadore Burnstine and designed by Percival Johnstone in 1922; (middle) the Hudson Motor Co. Building at Rosemont and Broadway, built in 1922; and (bottom) the Studebaker Motor Co. Building at Broadway and Glenlake, designed by W. P. Whitney in 1922.

franchise, was part of the northernmost, largest cluster between Elmdale and Devon, where other showrooms included Studebaker, Packard, Marmon, Hudson, and Hon, Smithson and Raymond (a dealership that sold Chevrolets). A smaller cluster was located to the south at Broadway and Hollywood, where Buick and the REO Automobile Company built showrooms. Farther south, between roughly Balmoral on the north and Argyle on the south, was a third cluster of showrooms, including ones for the Rangelcrot-Flotow Co. (a Ford dealership) and Peerless, anchored by a large four-story Cadillac showroom at Foster and Broadway.

These showroom buildings were typically one or two stories in height. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and available photographs indicate that the three-story Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building was a tall automobile showroom within the context of Broadway, surpassed only by the four-story Cadillac showroom at Foster (demolished). As with the Riviera, these showrooms typically were built of reinforced-concrete construction (the fireproof standard for automobile-related building uses by the 1910s), clad with brick and ornamented with stone and terra-cotta trim. Large first-floor storefront windows allowed passersby to clearly see automobile floor models waiting to be admired.

Around these showroom buildings were clustered smaller buildings that housed auxiliary service and sales businesses. These were typically one- and two-stories in height and, based on surviving examples, were somewhat plainer in their ornamentation. Together these automobile showrooms and sales and repair shops provided a distinctive visual character for much of Broadway that was greatly influenced by the popularity of the automobile.

In the 1920s and 30s, Broadway's automobile row companies prospered as they served the North Side lakefront neighborhoods of Edgewater, Rogers Park and Uptown. In the post-World War II years, however, there was increased expectation on the part of the buying public for automobiles that could immediately be bought and driven home (which these small sites largely precluded), rather than floor models that illustrated what could be factory-ordered. At the same time, the expansion of Chicago's suburbs encouraged the focus of the automobile trade to shift outside the city limits.

As a result, almost all Broadway automobile showroom buildings are no longer used for their original purposes. The only remaining new-car dealer is a Toyota dealership located between Bryn Mawr and Hollywood. Many showroom buildings have been torn down, including those for Cadillac, Auburn, Buick, Peerless, and Marmon. The most prominent that survive include the former Hudson Co. building (built in 1922) on the southeast corner of Rosemont and Broadway (now the Ismaili Community Center); the Studebaker Co. showroom (built in 1922) on the northeast corner of Broadway and Glenlake (now a Hancock Fabrics store, and heavily altered); and the former REO showroom (built in 1923) at the northwest corner of Broadway and Early (now offices for the Community Counseling Centers of Chicago). Of those showroom buildings that remain, the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building is arguably the most architecturally significant and has the best physical integrity.

AUTOMOBILE SHOWROOM ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO BEFORE 1930

The automobile showroom is a quintessentially 20th-century building type, but it had its origins in 19th-century buildings built for the horse trade. Chicago during the 19th century was a city of horses as much as it was of people. Buildings that provided for these work animals, who pulled upper-class carriages, horsecars for the middle- and working-classes, garbage and delivery wagons, and all of the other wheeled vehicles that made urban life possible, were found throughout the City. These included barns and livery stables, blacksmith shops, carriage and wagon repair shops, and stores that sold harnesses and other necessary accessories. When automobiles first were sold in the 1890s, businessmen in horse-associated businesses (along with bicycle manufacturers and sellers) were usually the first to sell and service these “new-fangled contraptions.” Buildings built for the horse trade were often converted to automobile use.

By the early 1900s automobile sales and service was becoming profitable enough that Chicago businessmen began to commission purpose-built automobile-related buildings, with showrooms being the most prominent due to their role in marketing and sales. Early on, though, these buildings remained relatively modest in appearance, often just one- or two-stories in height and one or two city lots (20 to 40 feet) wide. They were constructed in a traditional “storefront-upper floor-cornice” configuration that was traditionally and commonly used for commercial buildings. Ornament was minimal, although automobile brand insignia might be used in medallions or cartouches at the cornice line.

Large plate-glass storefronts provided visual access to first-floor interior sales rooms where automobile floor models showed the curious what cars looked like. These early showrooms rarely had room for more than two or three models; cars were usually ordered from catalogs and shipped from factories, and the available cars on site were typically there for display and marketing. These early showrooms were relatively modest in their spatial volumes and decoration with relatively little to distract visually from the display automobiles. Fine surviving examples include the Ford Motor Co. Showroom at 1444 S. Michigan Ave. (1905) and the Buick Motor Co. Showroom at 1454 S. Michigan Ave. (1907), both contributing buildings to the Motor Row Chicago Landmark District.

Soon however, more visually impressive automobile showrooms were being built in the years leading to World War I. They increasingly were taller (three or even four stories in height) and more decorative in their use of terra-cotta cladding and decorative metal details. Large-windowed storefronts remained standard. Showrooms were often larger and increasingly high-ceilinged, but typically remained relatively restrained in decoration. Increasingly these newer showroom buildings were large enough that repair and service work was done behind the showrooms in workspaces accessed from alleys or on upper floors accessed by ramps or freight elevators. Many examples can be found in Chicago’s Motor Row District, including the Locomobile Motor Co. Showroom at 2000 S. Michigan Ave. (1909); the Premier Auto Car Co. Showroom at 2329 S. Michigan Ave. (1909); the Centaur Motor Co. Showroom at 2248 S. Michigan Ave. (1912); the Mitchell Automobile Co. Showroom at 2334-38 S. Michigan Ave. (1910); and the Cadillac Motor Car Co. Building at 2301 S. Michigan Ave. (1911).



Automobile showrooms originally were housed in modest-sized and detailed buildings. Over the first three decades of the 20th century, they gradually became more expansive in scale and more elaborate in form and detail.

Top: The Ford Motor Co. Building at 1444 S. Michigan Ave., designed in 1905 by Christian Eckstorm, exemplifies the modest scale of first-generation automobile showrooms. Middle: The Premier Auto Car Co. Showroom at 2329 S. Michigan Ave., built in 1909 to a design by Holabird & Roche, is someone larger in scale and more elaborate in its terra-cotta ornament. Bottom: The Packard Motor Co. Showroom at the northeast corner of 24th St. and S. Michigan Ave. was even larger and grander in appearance.

The Ford and Premier showrooms are contributing buildings in the Motor Row District. The Packard showroom has been demolished.





The 1920s was the heyday of elaborately-detailed automobile showrooms such as the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building that were designed in historic architectural styles.



Top: The Hudson Motor Car Co. Building at 2222 S. Michigan Ave., built in 1922 and designed by Alfred Alschuler. It is a contributing building to the Motor Row District.

Middle: The Eastgate Motor Sales Co. Building at 3161 N. Clark St. (demolished), possibly designed by Clarence Hatzfeld in 1925.

Bottom: The Haggerty Chevrolet showroom at 6731 S. Western Ave. (now greatly altered), designed in 1929 by Jacques Kocher.



The design and construction of elaborately-detailed automobile showrooms was an early 20th-century phenomenon throughout the United States. Clockwise from top right: The Studebaker Motor Car Co. Showroom at 1469 Bedford Ave. in Brooklyn, New York, built in 1920 and designed by Tooker and Marsh; the Cadillac Motor Car Co. Building at 3324 Locust St. in St. Louis, built in 1919.; the Packard Motor Co. Building at Main and Riley Sts. in Buffalo, NY; a detail of the Howard Motor Sales Co. Building in Pasadena, California, designed in 1927 by the Austin Company of California; the Thompson Motor Car Co. Building in Denver, Colorado; a detail from the Don Lee Cadillac Motor Co. Building, San Francisco; and Anthony Packard showroom on Van Nuys Ave., San Francisco, California.



In the expansive economy of the 1920s, as Chicago grew rapidly and commercial buildings were increasingly becoming more elaborate in their use of historic architectural style and ornamental materials such as terra cotta, Chicago automobile showrooms built during this period often were richly decorated on both the exterior and interior. Two in the Motor Row Chicago Landmark District are especially noteworthy. The Hudson Motor Car Co. Showroom at 2222 S. Michigan Ave. and its neighbor, the Marmon Co. Showroom at 2232 S. Michigan Ave. were both designed by Chicago architect Alfred Alschuler in 1922 in the more fanciful and exotic Spanish Revival architectural styles. Other handsomely-decorated, exotic-looking showrooms were built elsewhere in Chicago, including 3041 W. Lawrence Ave. (c. 1925, extant) and 6731 S. Western Ave. (1929, greatly altered).

In an *Architectural Forum* article from March 1927, writer William F. Wharton noted the design and construction of increasingly elaborate automobile showrooms, especially their interiors. He noted that showrooms were increasingly being designed:

... with an air of luxury and leisurely detachment from any insistent suggestion of mere commercialism. The patrons, who presumably are accustomed to and appreciative of luxury, and who are looking with fastidious eyes at the qualities of the cars before them, are to be welcomed amid congenial surroundings. They are to be entertained,—not hurried,—in their inspection. The technicalities and formalities of sale and purchase are not to be over-emphasized by an obtrusive array of desks, typewriters, filing cabinets and other office paraphernalia.

More and more, automobile showrooms were seen much like art galleries, only instead of displaying paintings or sculpture, they were meant to show off the sleek designs and fine metalwork of new automobiles. The most elaborate showrooms, including the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, were conceived almost as “stage sets” meant to inspire both fantasy and longing. Upon entering, tall ceilings and elaborate ornamental walls, ceilings and floors were meant to provide customers with a sense of luxury and good taste, putting them in the mood to buy. In their use of exotic architectural styles, especially those associated with “Mediterranean” cultures such as Italy, Spain and Latin America, the most elaborate showrooms of the period were akin to motion picture palaces and popular ballrooms.

Wharton, writing in *Architectural Forum* specifically about the Cadillac showroom on W. 57th St. in New York, notes: “That is exactly what this carefully studied automobile show room is, a gallery.” He then goes on to discuss this design trend more broadly as a national phenomenon, noting that the best automobile showrooms possess “(1) an air of luxurious welcome for patrons; (2) adequate display facilities for the cars; and (3) the suppression of obtrusive commercial appointments.”

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is one of Chicago’s finest-surviving examples of such ornamental richness found in an automobile showroom. The exterior takes its visual cues both in terms of color and ornamental features from both Venetian and French Gothic buildings. The visually dominant band of Gothic-style ornament that projects above the building’s large storefronts acts as a “frame” for the large plate-glass showroom windows, treating them as

The salesrooms of automobile showrooms also underwent an evolution from simple to ornate during the first three decades of the 20th century.

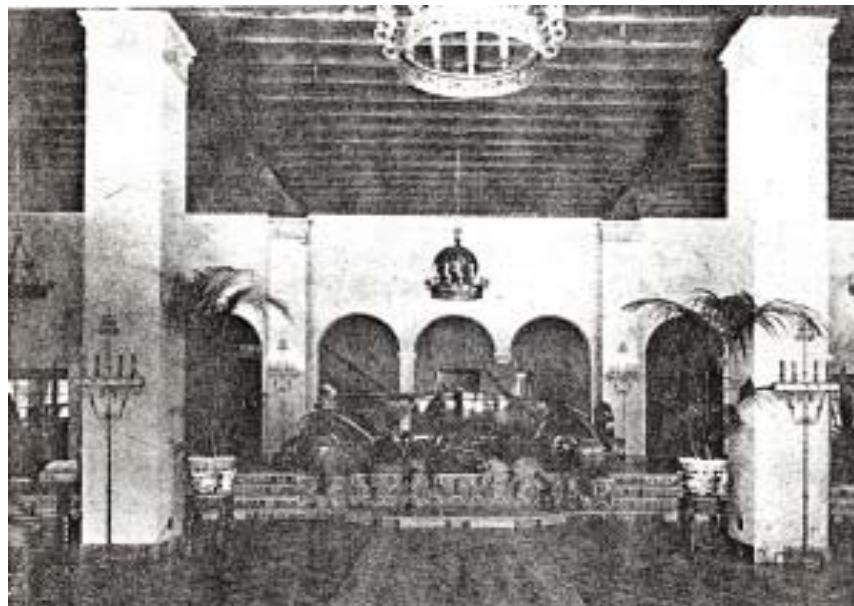
Top: The Ford showroom interior at 1444 S. Michigan (1906).



Middle: The Marmon showroom interior at 2232 S. Michigan Ave. (1922).



Bottom: The Packard Motor Car. Co. Showroom interior, Philadelphia.





Top: Salesroom for the Star Motor Car Co., Hollywood, California.

Middle left: Salesroom for the Thompson Motor Car Co., Denver, Colorado.

Middle right and bottom: Photos of the larger of the two former showrooms in the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building.





The Capitol Motor Sales Co. Building at 3041-43 W. Lawrence Ave. (1925-26) was also designed by R. Bernard Kurzon for the Burnstines. It is very similar to the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building in its exterior terra-cotta ornament and recessed showroom entrance. Its elaborately-detailed showroom, with its high ceiling; shallow-groined plaster ceiling with tiny “bosses,” or decorative knobs; “blind” arches in the flanking walls, and open mezzanine reached by staircases also shares many similarities of materials and detailing with the showrooms in the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building

though what a passerby saw within was a fine work of art. The building's visually-warm brown brick, used for upper floors and the rear service section, is a visually-appealing contrast to the cream- and pink-colored terra cotta.

Inside, the Riviera's showrooms were meant to express a visual air of luxury, refinement and good taste. High, finely-detailed ceilings provided adequate space for the display of automobiles and allowed for the use of lavishly-detailed, decorative-metal chandeliers. Rough-plastered walls ornamented with pointed-arched niches provide a sense of Mediterranean charm. Ornamented columns and wall pilasters also decorate the former showrooms. All of this decoration provides a sense of "luxe" for the display and selling of automobiles.

THE RIVIERA MOTOR SALES COMPANY BUILDING AND ITS USE OF HISTORIC REVIVAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, although built at the relatively modest scale of a typical Chicago neighborhood commercial building, is a visually-dramatic building due to its use of historic architectural styles and architectural terra cotta. It is largely ornamented in a variation of the Gothic Revival architectural style derived from both Venetian and French precedents. At the same time, the building combines Gothic decoration with ornament based on the rich history of Classicism. Using architectural terra-cotta, the building is richly detailed with Gothic tracery (both boldly and shallowly molded), hanging pendants, ogee-arched moldings, projecting crockets and finials, and simple drip moldings, mixed in with Classical round-arched pediments, idealized "putti" heads, low-relief foliate ornament, and a variety of Classical moldings, including foliate, leaf-and-dart, and egg-and-dart. The result, mixing visual motives from two major historical styles, is a visual eclecticism that is more typically associated with 1920s-era entertainment buildings such as movie theaters, but can be found in neighborhood commercial buildings as well.

Originating in France in the late twelfth century, Gothic architecture developed from the desire to achieve great height and maximum light in European cathedrals. Beginning at the Basilica of Saint-Denis just out side of Paris, France and flourishing throughout Europe through the sixteenth century, this architectural style was a style based on structural innovation combined with ornamental richness. Flying buttresses and pointed-arch vaulting made possible tall, beautifully-lighted interior spaces. Walls were visually "dematerialized" by the use of pointed arches and a plethora of stone ornamentation, including elaborate traceries, pinnacles, foliate capitals, and clover-like foils (quatrefoils and trefoils).

The Riviera does not utilize the structural innovations of the Gothic; instead it focuses on the style's decorative elements, including tracery, trefoils, and finials. The influence of the Venetian Gothic, which was a regional, northern Italian variation of the Gothic style, can be seen in the building's boldly-molded Gothic ornamental band that runs continuously above the storefronts.



The Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building's boldly-molded Gothic-style ornament and decorative brickwork are influenced by Venetian Gothic buildings such as the Doge's Palace in Venice (top left). Top right and middle: Details of the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building.

The Venetian Gothic style was the inspiration for other Chicago buildings, including (bottom left) the Chicago Athletic Club Building (within the Historic Michigan Boulevard District) and (bottom right) the Arthur Aldis House, designated as one of the Seven Houses on Lake Shore Drive.

This, along with the vivid contrast between light-colored terra cotta and dark-colored brick, shows the influence of the Venetian Gothic, especially that of the Doge's Palace in Venice, perhaps the best-known of Gothic-style buildings in this seaside city. The Venetian Gothic style has served as the inspiration for a number of other Chicago buildings, including the Chicago Athletic Club at 12, S. Michigan Ave., designed in 1893 by Henry Ives Cobb and located in the Historic Michigan Boulevard District, and the Arthur Aldis House at 1258 N. Lake Shore Dr., designed in 1896 by Holabird & Roche and located in the Seven Houses on Lake Shore Drive District.

The building also uses Gothic ornament from French Gothic precedents. The tracery in the storefront entrance pediments, with its central "flame" motive, is based on the late French Gothic Flamboyant period, as is the finely-molded ogee-arched molding above the apartment entrance on Elmdale, with its projecting crockets and attached finials.

In America, Gothic architectural motives formed the basis for the Gothic Revival style, which went through several phases from the 1840s through the 1920s. Early on, Gothic Revival was used rather freely for church buildings and country and suburban houses, sometimes made of stone but more often of wood board-and-batten. In the 1860s a polychromatic version of the Gothic Revival, based largely on Italian Gothic precedents, achieved some favor for institutional buildings. In the late 19th and early 20th century, a more academically correct variation on Gothic architecture was used for church buildings, while Tudor elements were added for many educational buildings, especially those for university and college campuses. In the 1920s Gothic Revival-style buildings were constructed taking advantage of the ability of architectural terra-cotta to mimic stone Gothic-style decoration and a number of buildings, including the Riviera, were designed utilizing this material and style.

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, although predominantly decorated with Gothic-style ornament, also mixes in Classical-style motives, including round pediments and moldings. Classicism, considered for centuries a prime cultural and stylistic foundation of Western civilization, began in ancient Greece as a cultural expression of religious values and a societal striving for perfection in honoring those values. It then became a fashionable architectural style for other Mediterranean cultures, most importantly that of the Roman Empire, which spread the style throughout its domain.

Dormant in the centuries after the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 5th century, Classicism was revived during the Early Renaissance years of the 15th century by Italian architects enamored of Roman civilization. It then went through centuries of elaboration, embellishment, and cultural transformation until, by the early twentieth century, Classical forms and motives were utilized by almost all types of buildings, both high-style and vernacular. Again, the popularization of architectural terra-cotta and the ease and economy with which it could be shaped into a variety of decorative forms made such popularization and use of Classical architectural forms and ornamentation ubiquitous during the 1920s.



The Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building also has finely-molded Classical-style ornament around its two storefront entrances facing Broadway. Gothic-style “flame” tracery based on late French Flamboyant Gothic precedents is found within the round-arched pediment.

THE ARCHITECTURAL TERRA-COTTA INDUSTRY IN CHICAGO

The finely-crafted terra-cotta ornament of the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building exemplifies the importance of the terra-cotta industry to Chicago in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It especially reflects the importance of the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company—the manufacturer of the building’s terra cotta—as arguably the premier terra-cotta manufacturer in the City during these years.

From the immediate post-Fire years of the 1870s through the early 1930s, Chicago was a leading American center for architectural terra-cotta design and manufacturing. Terra cotta factories took advantage of Chicago’s vibrant and innovative architectural community, its strategic location at the center of the nation’s great railroad transportation network, and its proximity to clay deposits in nearby Indiana.

In Italian, terra cotta means “baked earth.” For architectural purposes, however, terra cotta generally refers to building cladding or ornament manufactured from clay, hand molded or cast into hollow blocks with internal stiffening webs, and fired at temperatures higher than used for brick. Developed first to produce clay urns and garden statuary, the Chicago Terra Cotta Company the first terra cotta company in the United States—opened in 1868 and soon expanded into architectural terra cotta production.

During the great Chicago Fire in 1871 cast-iron structural members in building melted in the extreme heat, and brick and granite had broken and crumbled. After the Fire, while early builders used the cement and plaster of paris method, it was soon found that terra cotta could be used to encase steel structural supports such as I-beam and columns and produce the same desired fireproofing effect. These terra cotta pieces were much lighter than stone because of their hollow nature, and could be glazed a variety of colors to produce unique building finishes. Terra cotta also provided the ability to make molds for any decorative element to be repeatedly produced, compared to hand carving stone, or hand molding and firing clay. This method saved considerable time and money during the rapid building growth of Chicago in the 1920s.

Use of terra cotta expanded when Chicago passed an ordinance in 1886 requiring that all buildings over ninety feet in height should be absolutely fireproof. Builders of skyscrapers found terra cotta an attractive medium because of its lightness, durability (crisp details did not erode over time and could easily be cleaned), and potential for decorative uses (terra cotta’s plastic quality allowed for highly original ornament)—all attributes which stemmed from the nature of the material. By 1900 three important terra-cotta companies—Northwestern, American, and Midland—were headquartered in Chicago.

Both the availability of terra cotta, the ease and speed of its production, and the facility with which ornament, including Gothic and Classical, could be manufactured from it made terra cotta a very desirable building material. The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is an exceptional example of a 1920s neighborhood commercial building ornamented with terra cotta comprised of both Gothic and Classical details.

The Northwestern Terra Cotta Company

The architectural terra cotta that decorates the Riviera was manufactured by the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company, one of the nation's leading producers of architectural terra cotta. Northwestern Terra Cotta had its origins in the earlier Chicago Terra Cotta Company. Developed first to fashion clay urns and statuary, this company—the first terra-cotta company in the United States—opened in 1868 and soon expanded into architectural terra cotta production. As a practicing architect and with experience in pioneering Chicago architect John M. Van Osdel's office, Chicago Terra Cotta Company secretary Sanford E. Loring hired Italian clay modeler Giovanni Meli to execute European-style terra cotta. However, poor quality terra-cotta plagued the factory until James Taylor, then superintendent of England's largest terra-cotta works, came to the company in 1870. Taylor increased the quality of architectural terra cotta by utilizing a new kiln and better preparation of the clay body.

Spared by the Great Fire of 1871, the Chicago Terra Cotta Company successfully met the resulting building boom's demands. Finding that traditional building materials failed in the fire iron twisted, brick and granite broke and crumbled architects sought a new layer of protection and found the answer in terra cotta. Terra cotta provided a fire-proof barrier to less stable materials and was used both between and around cast-iron I-beams and columns, for floor beams, partitions and backing up exterior walls. In addition, there was a high demand for terra-cotta cornices, which had important cost and weight advantages over the more customary galvanized iron and stone cornices.

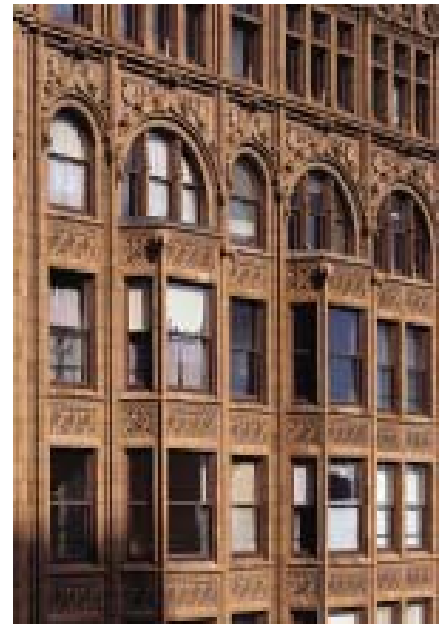
John R. True, Gustav Hottinger and John Brunkhorst, all three employees of the Chicago Terra Cotta Company, left the company in 1877 to start True, Brunkhorst & Co., meant to be a rival of the older company. Instead, the new firm became a de-facto successor when the Chicago Terra Cotta Company closed its doors in 1879. Renamed the Northwestern Terra Cotta Works, the fledgling company took over the Chicago Terra Cotta Company's orders and extensive factory. After 1883, Northwestern operated out of a huge plant at Clybourn and Wrightwood Avenues, and shipped its architectural terra cotta across the nation. By 1900, it had become the nation's largest terra cotta producer, employing 750 workmen in a plant covering twenty-four acres.

The city's building boom of the 1880s and 1890s boosted terra cotta's use as exterior cladding material because of its lightness, durability and potential for decorative uses. Terra cotta's plasticity allowed a higher degree of detail, which it retained longer than traditional building materials. The Northwestern Terra Cotta Company produced the terra cotta sheathing for many downtown buildings, including the Rookery (Burnham & Root, 1885); the Chicago Stock Exchange (Adler & Sullivan, 1894); and the Reliance Building (D.H. Burnham & Co., 1890, 1895). Continued demand for stock ornamental pieces kept the company especially busy.

The turn of the century saw an expansion of terra cotta producers in both Chicago and the nation. Although technological advancements of the 1920s brought improvements in production, including gas-fired tunnel kilns and glaze 'guns,' the industry remained based in labor-intensive hand modeling, pressing and finishing. However, by retaining skillful European

The Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building's terra cotta was manufactured by the Northwestern Terra Cotta Co., one of Chicago's leading terra-cotta makers. Top: A terra-cotta sample tile created by the Northwestern Terra Cotta Co., circa 1884. Bottom: The modeling room at Northwestern Terra Cotta, circa 1925.





The Northwestern Terra Cotta Company manufactured the terra cotta for many of Chicago's finest and most distinctive buildings, including (clockwise from top left): the Chicago Stock Exchange Building by Adler & Sullivan (demolished); the Fisher Building by D. H. Burnham & Co. (a designated Chicago Landmark); the Wrigley Building by Graham, Anderson, Probst & White; and the Reebie Storage Warehouse by George C. Nimmons (a designated Chicago Landmark).

clay modelers and maintaining high quality standards, the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company was able to secure the most prestigious contracts in the city during this period, including the Carbide and Carbon Building (Burnham Brothers, Inc., 1929), the Wrigley Building (Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, 1923) and the Chicago Theater (Rapp and Rapp, 1921). At the forefront of architectural trends, Northwestern Terra Cotta Company quickly brought six French sculptors to Chicago to create Art Deco motifs after the 1925 Paris Exposition.

Like other handcraft industries, the crash of 1929 and ensuing Great Depression sent the terra cotta industry into financial hardship. With contracts left unpaid and construction in Chicago altogether stopped by 1932, terra cotta manufacturers soon went out of business, including the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company. However, when the Works Progress Administration began the construction of public buildings, they specified terra cotta, and the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company reopened to fill the orders. The smooth terra cotta wall ashlar dictated by economic conditions during the depression continued after World War II with the influence of the International Style and its lack of ornament. Not cost-effective as a building material, the industry further suffered as terra cotta began to crack, crumble and rust with age. The Northwestern Terra Cotta Company was forced to close in 1956 and the remaining terra cotta businesses shut down by the mid-1960s.

LATER HISTORY

The Riviera Motor Sales Company remained a Chrysler automobile dealership under the ownership of the Burnstine family through the 1930s, as did the Burnstines' Capitol Motor Sales Company on W. Lawrence. Isadore Burnstine then acquired another Chrysler franchise and opened the Burnstine Motor Sales Co. in 1928 at 2524 N. Milwaukee Ave. in the Logan Square neighborhood. He died in 1936 and his son Ralph took over control of the family's automobile dealerships.

The Riviera Motor Sales Company operated out of the building until at least 1937 during the Great Depression. That year the Burnstine family turned over ownership of the building to the Lincoln National Life Insurance Co. Building, which owned the building until 1942, when it was sold to the 1211 Elmdale Corporation.

Through the 1940s and 1950s, the building was the location for the M.P. Masser Furniture Store. In the 1960s and 1970s the building housed the Chicago Art Galleries, an antique store and decorative-arts auction house. The auction house closed in 1976, moving to Evanston. In 1978 Broadway Bank opened in the building and occupied the building until 2010. The building currently houses a branch of MB Financial Bank. Upper floors remain in use as rental apartments.

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building was documented by the Illinois State Structures Survey, conducted in the early 1970s. It was later identified as "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey.

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[illegible]

A *Chicago Tribune* advertisement from 1937, a year after Isadore Burnstine died. The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building remained a Chrysler automobile dealership until at least this year.

In the years following World War II, the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building housed the M.P. Masser Furniture Store; the Chicago Art Galleries auctioneers; and (beginning in 1978) Broadway Bank.

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CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for landmark designation,” as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois or the United States.

- The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building exemplifies the importance of automobile sales and service in the economic, social and cultural history of Chicago during the early twentieth century.
- The building is the most architecturally-significant and most physically-intact automobile-related building on North Broadway, which was a historically-significant location for automobile-sales and service companies and businesses in the 1920s. It exemplifies the geographic dispersion of automobile-sales businesses from their original concentration along the pioneering South. Michigan Ave. “Motor Row” to the formation of neighborhood “motor rows” in outlying areas of the City in the 1920s.
- The building is an outstanding example of the use of architectural terra cotta for a small-scale neighborhood commercial building. It exemplifies the historic significance of the architectural terra-cotta industry to Chicago history and the importance of the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company the makers of the building’s terra cotta to that history.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is an outstanding example of a 1920s-era automobile showroom building, a building type of significance to the history of Chicago.
- The building’s design is influenced by Gothic and Venetian Gothic precedents, including the visually-prominent band of decoration embellishing the building’s storefronts, the visually-warm brick used for wall surfaces, the finely-crafted Gothic- and Classical-style

terra-cotta ornament used for the building, and the criss-cross “diaper” brick pattern that embellishes the building’s side (Elmdale) elevation.

- The building’s finely-detailed ornament mixes both the Gothic and Classical Revival styles, both of which are very significant historic styles in the development of Chicago architecture. This ornament is well-crafted and –designed utilizing ornament from both styles, including Gothic hanging pendants, quatrefoils and trefoils, tracery and finials, and Classical rounded pediments, idealized “putti” heads, low-relief foliate ornament, and Classical-style moldings, including egg-and-dart and bead-and-reel.
- The building’s interior originally built as an automobile showroom is one of the City’s finest such showrooms surviving from the 1920s, an era of visually-exotic and elaborately-detailed automobile showrooms. It possesses fine physical integrity, retaining rough-plastered walls ornamented with pilasters and blind arches, decorative pillars, a decorative low-relief coffered ceiling and historic decorative-metal chandeliers.

Criterion 7: Unique or Distinctive Visual Feature

Its unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Chicago.

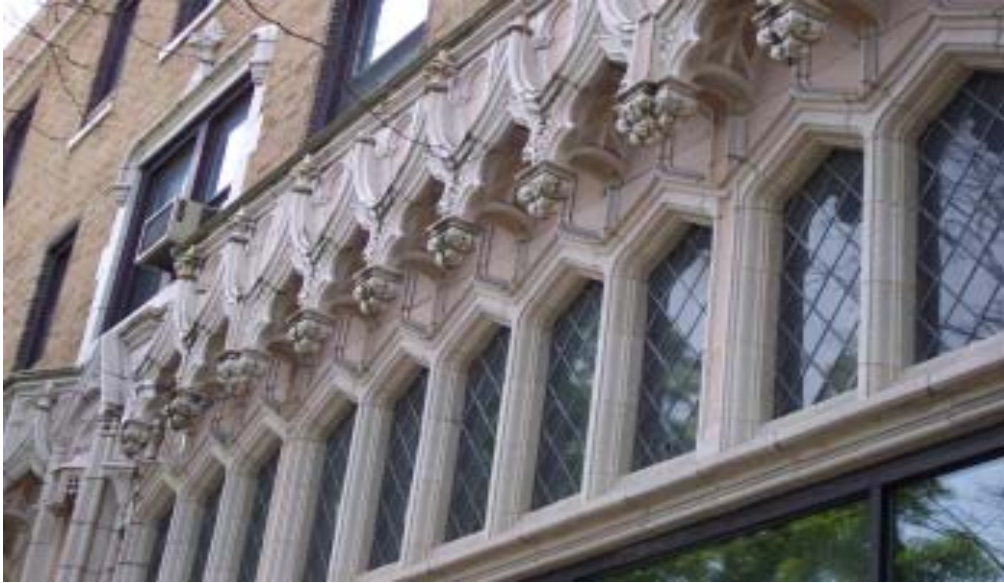
- With its exuberantly decorative exterior and finely-preserved and decorative showroom interior, the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building is a widely-known visual feature on North Broadway, a major street in the Far North Side Edgewater neighborhood.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

The Riviera Motor Sales Company Building possesses excellent exterior integrity and retains its overall architectural form and details, including almost all of its architectural terra-cotta ornament, leaded-glass transoms, and decorative brickwork. The property also retains fine interior integrity in its first-floor retail spaces, originally the salesrooms for the Riviera Motor Sales Company and more recently housing Broadway Bank, retaining their overall spatial volumes, decorative wall and ceiling surfaces, and decorative-metal chandeliers.

Changes that have occurred to the building over time are minimal. The building’s storefront windows have been replaced, but fill the historic openings of the storefront and retain transparency, which is rare for automobile showrooms of this vintage. Modern metal-and-glass “airlocks,” added sometime after 1987, enclose the originally-recessed storefront entrances at 5960 and 5948 N. Broadway, but retain transparency and allow passersby to see the original decorative finishes of the entrances. A few small areas of architectural terra cotta have been



**The Riviera Motor Sales Co.
Building is detailed with lavish,
finely-designed and crafted terra
cotta ornamentation.**





More details of the building.



removed from the building, replaced by substitute materials including brick, and some of the rooftop finials have been removed. Upper-floor windows have been replaced with windows with one-over-one, double-hung sash, most likely the correct sash configuration for the building.

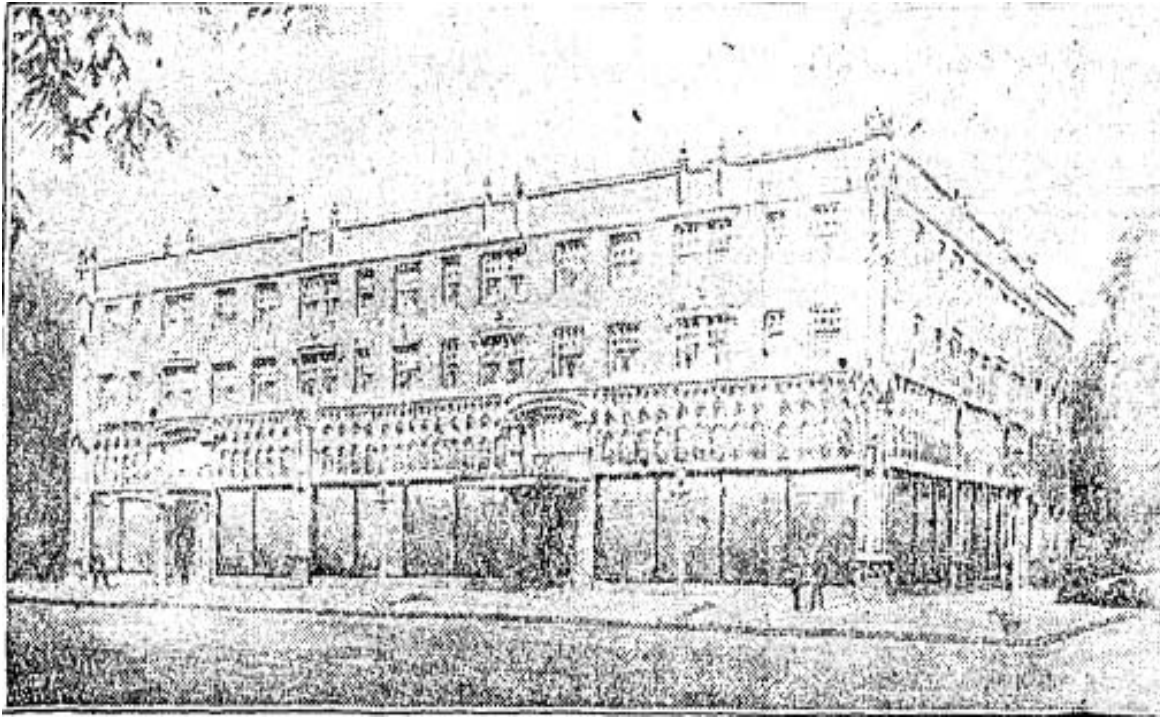
The building's apartment entrance facing Elmdale has a replacement metal-and-glass door and light standards, also added sometime after 1987. Rear vehicular entrances off the alley have been infilled with brick. The building retains the framework for a rooftop sign on the corner of Broadway and Elmdale. A covered drive-through window was added to the common-brick south wall circa 1978, when Broadway Bank opened in the building.

With these relatively minor changes, the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building exceptional physical integrity and retains the ability to express its historic community, architectural, and aesthetic value through its location, overall design, decorative details, historic materials, and workmanship.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, the Commission has identified the significant historical and architectural features of the building, and these are defined in the Commission's "Final Recommendation to the City Council of Chicago that Chicago Landmark Designation be adopted for the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building, 5948-60 N. Broadway,," dated April 5, 2012.



Top: A rendering of the Riviera Motor Sales Co. Building published in the *Chicago Tribune* in December 1925.

Bottom: The building in May 2010.

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A black and white illustration of a vintage car, possibly a Ford Model A, driving on a road. The car is shown from a front-three-quarter view, moving towards the right. It has large spoked wheels, a prominent front grille, and round headlights. The license plate area displays the number '15'. The car is kicking up a cloud of dust or motion lines behind it, suggesting speed. The road is depicted with simple lines, and there's a small tuft of grass or a bump on the left side of the road.

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LOOK WELL FOR THIS EMBLEM

[illegible][illegible]

J. REHM MOTOR & RADIO SALES
11355 S. Michigan Ave.
RIVIERA MOTOR SALES
5948 Broadway

DOCK AND BAY WATER
10952 S. Michigan Ave.



Kurzon's two North Side automobile showrooms - the Riviera Motor Sales Co. (top) and the Capitol Motor Sales Co. Building (middle) - are unusual in the context of Chicago automobile showrooms in their inclusion of apartments. The Riviera's apartments are above the showrooms while those associated with the Capitol are in an adjacent, attached building. The Gothic-style terra-cotta and diaper-pattern brickwork found on the Capitol's apartment building is similar to that found on the Riviera.

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Chicago History Museum: pp. 18 (top, bottom left) and 23 (middle).

Various internet websites: p. 24, 31 (top left), and 37 (top right).

From Wharton, "Architecture and Decoration of Automobile Show Rooms:" pp. 26 (bottom) and 27 (top & middle left).

From Darling, *Chicago Ceramics & Glass*: pp. 36 and 37 (top left, middle & bottom).



Photos of the entrance “airlock” vestibule of the larger former showroom in the Riviera Motor Sales Company Building.

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